

Prologue

This report is submitted pursuant to the “United Nations Participation Act of 1945” (Public Law 79-264). Section 4 of this law provides, in part, that:

“The President shall from time to time as occasion may require, but not less than once each year, make reports to the Congress of the activities of the United Nations and of the participation of the United States therein.”

In July 2003, the President delegated to the Secretary of State the authority to transmit this report to Congress.

The *United States Participation in the United Nations* report is a survey of the activities of the U.S. Government in the United Nations and its agencies, as well as the activities of the United Nations and those agencies themselves. More specifically, this report seeks to assess UN achievements during 2006, the effectiveness of U.S. participation in the United Nations, and whether U.S. goals were advanced or thwarted.

The United States is committed to the founding ideals of the United Nations. Addressing the UN General Assembly in 2003, President Bush said,

“The founding documents of the United Nations and the founding documents of America stand in the same tradition. Both assert that human beings should never be reduced to objects of power or commerce, because their dignity is inherent. Both recognize a moral law that stands above men and nations, which must be defended and enforced by men and nations. And both point the way to peace, the peace that comes when all are free.”

The United States believes that the United Nations should be a place where diverse countries and cultures of the world work together for freedom, democracy, peace, human rights, and prosperity for all people. In 2006, the United Nations continued to face many challenges in living up to those founding principles.

This report treats thematically UN activities that most significantly affected U.S. interests. It is divided into six chapters:

Part 1, on **Political and Security Affairs**, focuses on activities undertaken by the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. Under the UN Charter, the primary responsibility for this task lies in the Security Council, which is empowered to take various actions to maintain international peace and security through the adoption of resolutions authorizing peacekeeping and special political missions, or by employing coercive measures including sanctions. The activities of the UN General Assembly and other UN bodies are also described. This chapter also covers security-related thematic issues, such as disarmament and international terrorism.

In 2006 the United States continued to work in the United Nations for a resolution to the crisis in Darfur, Sudan. Although the Sudanese government and a significant rebel faction signed the Darfur Peace Agreement in May, the conflict in Darfur intensified, led by rebel groups that did not sign the agreement. In August, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1706, authorizing a transition of the African Union's mission in Sudan (AMIS) to a larger and more robust UN peacekeeping operation. A meeting convened by the United Nations and the African Union in November led to an agreement providing for UN support to AMIS in three phases – a light support package, followed by a heavy support package, and finally a joint AU/UN hybrid support operation. In spite of the agreement, Sudan's President Bashir continued to resist UN deployment in Darfur.

Faced with Iran's decision early in 2006 to resume enrichment-related activities and to suspend its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Security Council adopted Resolution 1696, calling on Iran to take steps required by the IAEA and to suspend enrichment-related and reprocessing activities. Iran's continued refusal to cooperate led the Council to later adopt Resolution 1747, which imposed a range of sanctions on Iran.

In the Middle East, the Security Council helped broker a cessation of hostilities after fighting in Lebanon in July and August that resulted from Hizballah attacks on Israel and the capture of Israeli soldiers. Security Council resolution 1701 provided for an expanded UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which numbered nearly 12,000 by the end of the year. The Council also extended the mandate for the International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIC) investigating the 2005 assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, and laid the groundwork for an international Tribunal to prosecute those identified by UNIIC as involved in the Hariri killing and related crimes.

Part 2, on **Economic and Social Affairs**, assesses the work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and various subsidiary bodies and commissions on issues that involve economic development, the status of women, humanitarian aid, and crime prevention and control.

The United Nations' new Human Rights Council held its first three regular sessions, as well as four Special Sessions, in 2006. The United States was disappointed in the Council's nearly singular focus on Israel, and remained concerned that the Council lacked the will to address urgent and serious human rights situations. The United States decided not to run for election for membership in the Council that took place in May. In contrast to the Human Rights Council's weak performance, in the General Assembly's Third Committee the United States, Canada and the European Union were able to pass country-specific condemnatory human rights resolutions against Belarus, Burma, Iran and North Korea. While a U.S.-sponsored resolution against Uzbekistan was blocked from consideration by a procedural motion,

retaliatory resolutions against the United States by Belarus and against Canada by Iran were soundly defeated.

Part 3, on **Specialized Agencies**, describes the activities of a host of agencies, from the Food and Agriculture Organization to the World Health Organization, and assesses how they served U.S. interests.

Part 4, on **Legal Developments**, highlights the work of the judicial bodies, such as the War Crimes Tribunals in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

Part 5, on **Reform of the UN System**, describes progress on reform of the United Nations, and of the main UN bodies.

Although progress was made on the implementation of reform initiatives agreed to earlier, the United States was concerned about a move by many member states to stall a package of reforms to modernize the UN Secretariat, and by the lack of progress on U.S. priorities for reform, including review of program mandates.

Part 6, on **Administration and Budget**, provides an overview of the current UN financial situation and resource management issues.

At the end of 2006, the General Assembly adopted new scales of assessments for the UN regular budget and for UN peacekeeping for the years 2007–2009. The United States was successful in maintaining the 22-percent ceiling on its assessment rate for the UN regular budget, and the assessment rate for peacekeeping was reduced from nearly 27 percent to roughly 26 percent.

Finally, the report's appendices include the President's 2006 speech to the UN General Assembly. Appendices also include information about the principal organs of the United Nations and their membership and leadership in 2006, a list of U.S. representatives to the United Nations in 2006, and other reference information.

Questions about this report may be directed to the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, U.S. Department of State.